

Entrants to the Irish Leaving Certificate in physics 2017



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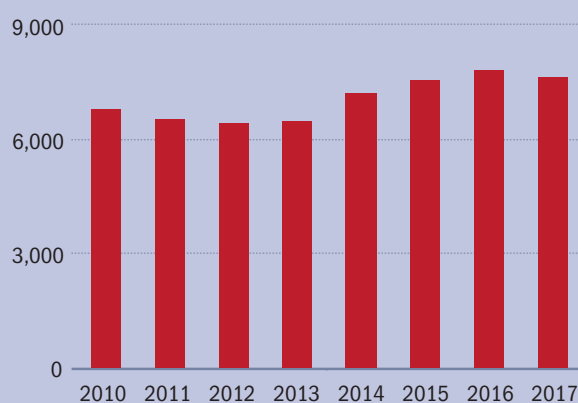
This briefing outlines a short set of statistics on students who took Leaving Certificate physics in 2017, broken down by gender and entrants as a proportion of total entrants. It also provides comparisons with previous years and with biology, chemistry and mathematics. Data comes from the Irish Government website.

Total entrants

The total number of entrants to physics dropped by 2.2% in 2017 to 7,585, but this was still the second highest number of entrants taking the subject since 2005.

The proportion of all entrants taking Leaving Certificate physics in 2017 was 13%. This was a drop of 0.3% from 2016, which was the highest proportion of all entrants since 2007. The proportion taking physics had risen every year between 2011 and 2016, after falling every year between 2004 and 2011 (from a high of 14.8% in 2003). The average proportion of total entrants taking physics between 2001 and 2017 was 13.1%.

Physics Leaving Certificate entrants 2010–17

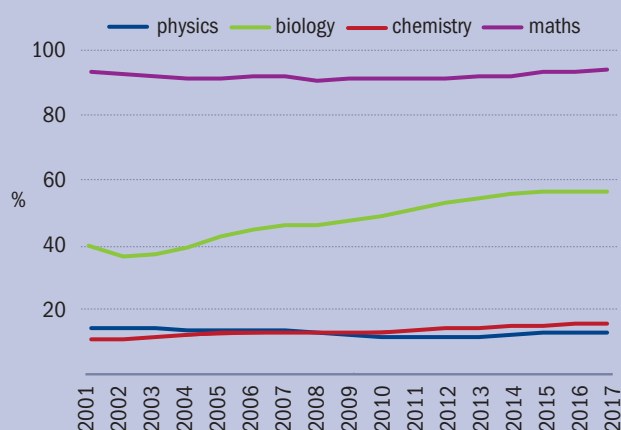


Entrants compared to other subjects

The numbers of chemistry entrants as a proportion of total entrants is similar to physics. The number of chemistry entrants in 2017 was 9,468. At 16.2% of all entrants, this was also the highest proportion of chemistry entrants since at least 2001.

Biology and mathematics have consistently higher proportions of total entrants than physics or chemistry. In 2017, there were 34,292 entrants to Leaving Certificate biology, which was 58.6% of all entrants.

Physics, chemistry, biology and maths Leaving Certificate entrants 2010–17 as a proportion of total entrants





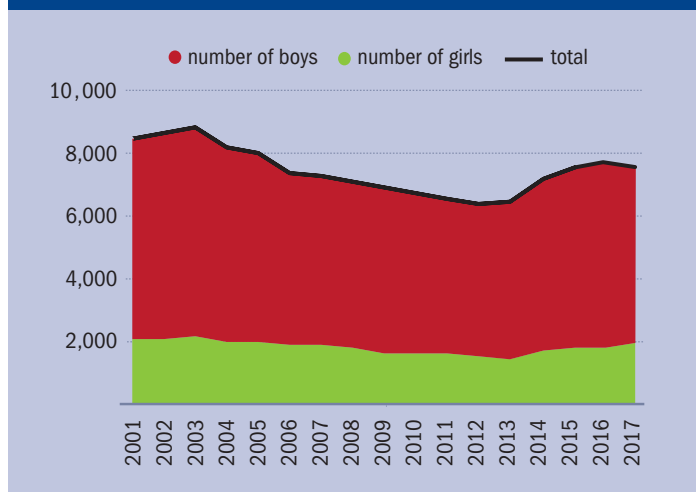
There were 54,665 entrants to mathematics in 2017, which equates to 93.4% of all entrants. The proportion (and number) of maths entrants has remained largely stable since 2001, ranging between 90.3% and 93.4%, with an average of 91.3%.

Entrants by gender

The number of female entrants taking Leaving Certificate physics in 2017 was 1,979. This was 111 more students than in 2016 and the highest number of female entries since 2005. The number of female entrants has largely followed the trend of male entrants, falling almost every year between 2003 and 2014, but it has risen between 2013 and 2017 by 458 students.

However, female entrants represent just 26.1% of all physics entrants. The proportion of female entrants has fluctuated by just 2.5 percentage points between 2001 and 2017.

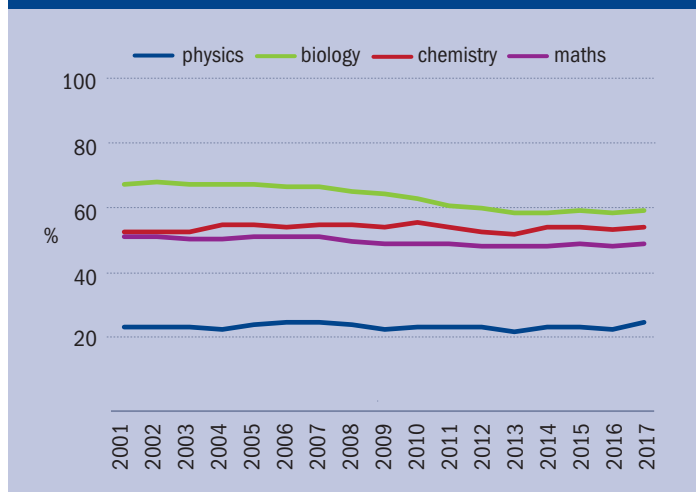
Physics Leaving Certificate entrants by gender 2001–17



In chemistry, biology and maths, the proportion of female entrants has largely remained above 50% since 2001. Female entrants make up a slightly greater proportion of chemistry entrants, an average of between 54.9% between 2001 and 2017.

Although female entrants have made up far higher proportions of biology entrants since 2001 (an average of 64.2%), there has been a gradual downwards trend as increasing numbers of male students are choosing to study biology. Females made up 60.1% of entrants to biology in 2017. In mathematics, the proportion of females was 49.8% in 2017, reflecting the overall cohort of Leaving Certificate entrants.

Proportion of female entrants in physics, chemistry, biology and maths between 2001 and 2017*



*As a proportion of total entrants

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